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ABSTRACT

This booklet is one of a series of teacher-written curriculum publications launched by the Bay Area Writing Project, each focusing on a different aspect of the teaching of composition. Introductory sections discuss writing fluency and the goals and procedures of a high school writing workshop for noncollege preparatory students. The work of three representative students is presented in a case study account of the positive effects of the workshop approach on student writing interests and abilities, emphasizing the presentation of written work to peers for evaluation and feedback. An appendix contains samples of writing workshop materials and examples of student writing at the beginning and the end of the course. (RL)

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An Experiment in Encouraging Fluency

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By

MIRIAM YLVISAKER

Teacher of English
Oakland High School
Oakland, California

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Preface

Since 1978 the Bay Area Writing Project has been encouraging its Teacher Consultants to conduct informal studies of teaching practices and writing techniques. Studies of this sort do not rely on the heavy artillery of research, but are structured enough so that the teacher has some evidence other than testimony and intuitive insight to confirm or dispel the soundness of what is attempted. Miriam Ylvisaker's experiment in encouraging fluency in just such a study. It is small scale—a short time span, a manageable number of students, a minimum of before and after testing—yet it provides evidence to test her assumptions about the effect of setting and response on fluency in writing.

Writing teachers should be encouraged by Miriam's informal study. Not only does it describe the influence of a workshop setting and a supportive audience on her students' writing, it illustrates the ease with which a change in practice may be assessed.

James Gray, *Director*
Bay Area Writing Project
School of Education
University of California, Berkeley

Free Flow

The idea that when working with beginners in writing emphasis should be placed on fluency prior to concentrating on form and correctness is finding increasing acceptance. Moffett, Britton, Shaughnessy all have long pointed in this direction; moreover, a number of independently formulated presentations given at Bay Area Writing Project meetings—Marlene Griffith* and Smokey Wilson from junior colleges, Keith Caldwell, Mary K. Healy, among others, at the high school level—have all testified to classroom experience which verifies the sequence: expressive to transactional or poetic; diary to journal to memoir to exposition; fluency to form to style and correctness. Labels vary, but underlying theory is similar, and evidence increasingly emerges for the soundness of writing curriculum which takes this sequence into consideration.

As anyone knows who has watched a beginning writer work, difficulties with fluency amount almost to physical disability. A student's entire energy goes into gripping the pencil, body twisted and contorted, struggling to make code marks on the page. For this student is still, no matter what age, back at an elementary level when making letters was primary; one did not think about whole words, sentences, ideas, paragraphs, pages, or coherence. Handwriting itself testifies to this. It tends to be cramped; and frequently when conferring with the teacher, the student who has not done much composing will blurt out an apology, "Yes, I need to learn to write better; it looks terrible."

While the student, especially the remedial student, may sometimes think improving writing means improving handwriting, the high school writing teacher is not ordinarily concerned with this problem. We should, of course, clear up this confusion; and we should make it clear to the students that one of our primary concerns is with helping them get sufficiently detailed discourse down on paper in a reasonable amount of time. Our concern is thus with length, to a certain degree (the direction to "write about 500 words" is not necessarily a mindless injunction); but, of more importance, our concern is with the texture of prose: we want to increase the textural density of the student's prose, to combat what Francis Christensen characterized as the pervasive thinness of adolescent prose.

The experiment described in these pages was an effort to test the

*See especially Griffith's "Writing for the Inexperienced Writer: Fluency, Shape, Correctness." (Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley/Bay Area Writing Project, Curriculum Publication No. 9, 1979)

assumption that setting (working conditions) and response (criticism) can be organized and shaped to encourage fluency*; specifically, that a workshop setting (where students write not only for themselves and the teacher but also for the class as audience, where what they write is published for consumption by the class, and where students read what they write to the class and solicit response) and an encouraging atmosphere (an atmosphere relatively free from negative criticism and free from the threat of grades, of "grading down") will help students increase their fluency and will improve their attitude toward writing.

This was not a formal experiment. I do not have class sets of pre and post samples of writing on comparable topics composed under carefully controlled similar conditions. Nor did I administer a standardized writing attitude inventory. And, unfortunately, I did not have access to a control group. Yet I do have evidence that should be of interest to the writing teacher: pre and post writing samples from students representative of those who demonstrated change, the students' own perceptions of how they improved and of how their attitude toward writing changed, and my observations about sound teaching practices based on the behavior of the students over a six week period.

PROCEDURE

For six weeks in an eleventh grade Writing Workshop class at Oakland High School the entire work of the class consisted of the students writing and reading aloud what they had written. A copy of each piece of writing was given to each student as soon after it was finished as was possible. In many cases this was the same day, sometimes the following day, or once in a while (when nothing at school worked and I had to use commercial photocopying) two or three days following. I urged students to use dittos, a practice which prompted them to write a rough draft before preparing the ditto master. (Now and then students rebelled against composing on a ditto master—"It's too much *trouble!*" Then I simply photocopied, as I did when someone wrote something of exceptional length or wanted to include something from a journal or something written where no stencils were available.)

For the first few days at the beginning of each period I placed the stacks of students' writings on a large table and the writer distributed copies to each person; then we read aloud. However, as students began to work at their own rate and pace, it was not possible to be systematic about this. The student distribution process was often chaotic, but it served as a helpful step, because once a student had given a copy of her writing to each person in the room the next step—reading it to the class—became less formidable.

*I use the term fluency to include not only the notion of measurement (sheer bulk, length of sentences, and frequency of syntactic constructions) but also the notion of variety of forms (e.g., monologue, dialogue, narrative, reminiscence, diary, interview).

At first, reading aloud was structured rather formally. We sat in a circle; there were shy pauses, nervous giggles; one or two said they couldn't read but a friend would read for them. Within a few days everyone was willing to read aloud. Although I tried to confine reading time to the beginning of the period and leave the rest of the time uninterrupted for writing, students often, as they finished, asked to go to the ditto room, then returned to class, passed out their papers and read them aloud. This immediacy, this urgency, encouraged others to do the same. Each reader was asked to write a comment (see Appendix Item 3) on each piece of writing, and to sign his name or initials. All copies, with comments, were then returned to the author.

No minimum or maximum number of pages or writings was assigned. I told students that, since it was near the end of the semester, I knew them and their capabilities well; hard work would earn high grades. We made a huge chart for one wall; next to their names students filled in a title and date for each piece of writing as they completed it.

Each Monday I distributed what came to be known as "the week sheet" —writing topic choices, primarily personal experience topics of the sort that lend themselves to anecdotal writing or opinion topics on controversial issues—things that would be interesting to read aloud and which might prompt discussion. I also kept a file box of additional topics and occasionally asked students to write topics on 3 × 5 cards and add them to the box; sometimes we read short stories or saw films for ideas; school events generated material. At all times students were encouraged to write about whatever they wished in whatever form they wished, not limiting themselves to the choices and suggestions made for them.

And finally, materials. Operating out of my own recollected childhood joy in a new pencil box full of pencils, a brand new clean lined tablet, I tried, within our limits, to provide luxury. There was a typewriter in the room, cards of different sizes, felt-tipped colored pens. If a kid forgot a pencil I gave her one and didn't try to remember to get it back. Someone gave me a gross of pencils (with erasers!); a friend got me 60 ballpoint pens for 40¢ a dozen from Arden's in Los Angeles; there was plenty of paper, lined and unlined; we were rich.

THE STUDENTS, THE CONTEXT

At Oakland High School, Writing Workshop is a non-college preparatory elective. For almost a third of the class English was a second language. Absenteeism—brief, longterm, gone-on-Fridays, absent-when-it-rains—was chronic and endemic; and school was interrupted by a nine-day teacher strike in mid-semester; this was followed by a strike of the AC Transit bus drivers. Class enrollment was 37; daily attendance averaged 25.

About half of the class signed up for it because they wanted to; the other half was made up of students who, not having shown up for program-

ming or registration, were placed in the class—much against their wishes, as a few made clear—by their counselors. Although no students wrote really well, there were three or four who wrote freely, and should have been in a more advanced class but for scheduling reasons were forced to remain.

The writing problems in the class were extensive: from the crippling lack of control of English syntax and idiom exhibited by the English as a Second Language students to the uncertainties about sentence sense (run-ons, comma splices, fragments) and about the conventions of Standard Written English (e.g., agreement, case, spelling, punctuation, capitalization) typical of the basic writing student. The following short piece, by a boy from Viet Nam, is characteristic of the ESL students' work.*

> Shopping, friend, play, spend money. They are all I like very much. Usually I spend a lot of money when I find it in my hand. My mother doesn't want to do that, she alway sad about me. But I don't care what she said I just keep going what I like in my mind that is spend money, be nice with everyone but in one day, the sky is dark, the birds stop singing. That is the day I feel said and unhappy, because my money done, and my friends far away from me.

A second example, a short narrative, is typical of the lower-middle range of the class. An event clearly moves from beginning through middle to end, but the account is sparse in detail, not fleshed out. The sentences are short and choppy, and there are many errors.

> One night Around the corner The police and the black panther was having a shoot out. I was looking throw my window and I called my brother and sister they came and look to. The next day me and my friends went in the house where the police shot up and we left out a man was throwing bricks at people cars. The police came and took him to jail. About a week later Some men came and fixed the house back up. Then some more people moved in the house.

A third example, perhaps not so prone to error, illustrates again the lack of detail, the thinness, the barrenness characteristic of these students' writing.

> I feel that dating is alright. There's nothing wrong with it. Some parents think it's to early for their baby girls, as they think of us, to be dating. Young men and women these days are at the age of

*In some cases I have edited student writings to make them shorter; in all cases, however, I have kept the original punctuation, spelling and sentence structure.

15 and 16 years old when they really start dating. You can learn where you make your mistakes. Parents have to open their eyes sometimes too. Some parents don't feel your old enough, but after they find out that you are going to do a certain something anyway they go ahead and let you. I'm talking about dating. Dating you learn how to communicate with one another etc. It kind of makes me feel like a lady. Which I know I am.

WHAT HAPPENED: THREE STUDENTS

It would be gratifying to be able to report a miraculous turn-around of the entire class; that of course did not occur. At the end of six weeks those who wrote badly still did not write well, those who messed around still did so, and those who cut a lot still absented themselves. However, certain benefits did emerge, some immediately, some more slowly, and some only in retrospect.

One immediate subjective result was that the class, for me, became easier and more fun. Released from the necessity of specific day-to-day planning and free of the clerical and physical burdens that juggling several student activities per period requires, I was able to spend my entire energy and the entire class time helping students in whatever ways seemed appropriate. For the most part the routine—reading aloud, then writing—took care of itself. It was perfectly obvious when student papers were passed out that reading came next, and throughout the six weeks student interest in what was on the pages and a kind of joking good humor toward the writer prevailed. It was not necessary for me to give instructions, set tone, or maintain discipline; these things came about naturally, in a spontaneous and organic way.

I have selected the work of three students as representative of some of the changes that came about.* The first student illustrates a basic change, one achieved by most of the regularly attending students: the ability and willingness to write more, to put in the details, the specifics that would make the tale or incident interesting to the class. The second student illustrates a different kind of change (one evidently begun considerably before enrolling in Writing Workshop): a willingness to compose in many forms, a releasing of a sense of drama, of a storytelling sense that shows imaginative promise. I include the work of the third student because it perplexes me somewhat. The student's output of words obviously increased; the sheer flow of his words became a force to be reckoned with. Yet what the flow reveals is a nascent pulp fiction writer, obviously weaned on the cardboard characters and predictable situations of popular culture.

Student A: This student made progress in three ways—his writings became longer, he made fewer errors, and his sentences more closely approximated

*The Appendix contains additional samples of before and after student writings.

the rhythms of his speech. A remedial student who had been transferred out of a regular tenth grade class and been placed into a reading class which was rowdy and inattentive ("We didn't do nothin."), he was now, in eleventh grade, ready, in a sense, to make up for lost time. He was on both the varsity football and basketball teams and was beginning to think about college and scholarship possibilities.

This piece of writing is from the beginning of the six week period:

> During the strike I didn't do to much my usul rutine was. I would get up at about evleven oc'clock and come up to school for I would see when was practice. Every-day the coach would tell us to come to the pikett line to see when we have practic or just ask around. After I find out I would just sit on the bench outside and wast some time by just sitting around and talking. Cause we would have to meet at the school for we could go up to practice. I would come home and proble study a little and get in front of the T.V.

This account of activities is characterized by a thinness of detail (a reliance on summarizing action rather than showing it), by repetitiousness (notice how many times "practice" is referred to), by an uncertainty in spelling, and by a certain awkwardness (e.g., the clumsy "for I would see") not apparent in the student's speech. In contrast, the sentences in the next excerpt, written toward the end of the experiment, are less constrained; the piece itself is longer (one and a half pages as compared with half a page); spelling errors are not as frequent; and there is considerably more detail, indicative of an increased awareness of audience.

> When I was ten years old I played on this football team and we use to have practice after school and games on Saturday. We use to practice at fruitvale field. On are way home we would walk down the hills and catch the fifty three bus from Colige Ave. We would ride the bus all the way down to East 14th. Sometimes we would get off on foothill. We would only do this when we had some money. We would go and buy some Chinese rice and maybe something else if we had enough money. Well let's get to the good part. We got off of the fifty three bus and was waiting for a eighty going toward East Oakland. While we were waiting for the bus everybody was walking around trying to find something to do. And one of the people that was with us just happened to go down to the end of the corner by this bar. Then a couple more went down there and they just happened to look in and see some instruments. First one person when in and then everybody went on and got a instrument and started to play for a minute and then everybody ran out of the place. We did again and again and someone called the Police and they came and caught three of us. They put

them in the police car and said they was going to take them down town. I was not one of the three to get caught but they told me that the police just took them around the corner and talk to them. And let them out.

At first Student A would ask only me for help in his proof-reading. He always wrote a rough draft and would bring it to me when everyone else in the class was busy (and unobserving of him) and ask me to point out errors. I underlined, he fixed those he could (on his own or with a dictionary), and then I looked at the paper again and told him where the problem lay with whatever errors he had not been able to correct. Then he wrote a clean draft. This was not a procedure I imposed on him; he initiated it. Later he became freer about asking for help, requesting aid from students as well as from me, "How do you spell it? How does this sound?" he would ask; sometimes he would take the suggestions, but occasionally I heard him say, "No, my way sounds better." Everything he wrote was related in some way or other to sports.

Student B: This student experimented with a wide variety of forms: error count diminished during this period. She perceived the Writing Workshop class as one in a recent series of English classroom experiences which had improved both her skills and attitudes towards writing.

I've never really liked to write. When I was in elementary I hated English, period. I hated spelling, writing, and everything related with English. I don't know or remember the reason for this. In junior high the only reason I really went to my English class is because I didn't know about cutting yet. I didn't know how to put my ideas on paper. Whenever we had spelling tests I never received a grade higher than a D.

She then goes on to describe two summer school English classes which she took when her parents and a counselor became concerned about her lack of skills; both these classes were a positive experience.

This year, I feel I've imporved a great deal in my ability to write. I really like writing now and I enjoy thinking up different ideas to write about. I want to keep on so I can get better. Who knows, someday I might be a great book writer.

Among the forms which appeared in student B's work were interior monolog, poetry, fictionalized events, dialogue/skit material, rebuses, concrete poetry, letters, a play which she worked on with other students, and a fable (beginning "Once there was an alligator named Otis") in which she transformed six members of the class into animals. She herself became

a rabbit. Student A became "the dancing bear" and, after a series of changes, Otis achieved his goal of becoming "humble, shy, happy, and a vegetarian." Ideas for some of these projects came from the writing topics box; others no doubt carried over from previous classes; whatever the source, she almost always changed or adapted the topic to her own wishes and purpose.

In her journal she developed a form which began with a single sentence set separately on the page, followed by the page or so of writing which the sentence evoked, as in this sample:

> "I love you.
>
> "I love you," he says. "I love you and I'll do anything I can do for you. I'll lie for you, I cheat for you, I'll steal for you, I'll even kill for you. I love you." "How can you love me if you would do all the wrong things for me, you don't love me. If you would steal for me, you don't love me. I wouldn't do any of those things for you, but I love you. I love myself more but I love you."
>
> Theres so many things on my mind. School and this boy are the main things. I really want to do good in school. Its hard sometimes to stick to the things that are good for you. Some how the bad things seem to pull you away."

The next semester this student took Intermediate Composition, a university preparatory class, and earned a grade of B.

Student C: This student was a hyperactive, maverick type of kid who wrote only brief sentences or not at all when the semester began; I nagged, he joked. After the strike this piece of writing (which he read aloud, automatically correcting errors as he read) met with great approval from the class:

> Well It was very boring and there was nothing to do except cut and go home or harass the subs or just go get high or go down to the movies. And another thing would be to go home were were you like. And another thing that I did not like was that allmost all the subs just sat on their ass and did not teach anyone and the rest of the day was just very very dead and there were not good looking subs anyway. (illustrated with two stick figures carrying picket signs: teachers on strike)

Student C's handwriting was terrible. Then he began typing, but his typing was atrocious too. The next piece of writing, reproduced in full and exactly as typed, was greeted with comments and groans when Student C passed it out. "I can't read this;" "This is all messed up."

3 57 magnums
#####################

IT all started at a wild party quton a yacth. there was a lot of people dancing talking and other people just getting drunk. AT about 2:00 am everybody was slowing down all the drunks were sound asleep everybody else was just re laxing and enjoying the night. WHITCHwas a coolbrezi#gn a hot night as I walked over a copule who were laydown on the steeps I smiled IT had been a long night and it was time to go to bed but as I walked to my cabin I herd two men talking and it sounded as if one of#them wanted to kill a man so Inatura ly took a look through# the door witch was part way open.THE room was d ark and there was just a night light on and Iherd this clicking and poping sound. AND as Iwent to take a closer look I soon saw what was making the noise it x was a m an and he was holding two #### 357 ma gnums one of the worlds most powerful hand guns. WELL, I did not stick a round so I went to my cabin a nd my hart was beating very hardand I thought it would burst .WHEN I got two my room I called the captain and he told me he was going to send someone down right wa y Ifelt xxx asmall relife then there was a knock on my door I went to go and open it and it was the man I saw in the dark. HE smiled in a evilway and shut the door and he slowly pulled out a 357 and Istarted to sweat and then he pulled ba ck the hammerand.....357.

As soon as he began reading "It all started at a wild party..." he had total attention. Students laughed aloud about the drunks and the couple lying on the steps, but when he got to the clicking and popping of the handguns the mood was tense, and at the end of his reading there were disgruntled responses: "You can't just end it there." "What happens next?" "Did you write this yourself?" "It sounds like Chapter One of a book."

Though popular with the class, neither piece of writing was one that I felt I could respond to with genuine enthusiasm. The second one particularly was so derivative that I said nothing at all. So, if it had not been for the reading aloud, Student C could not have received the feedback, much of it positive, which he did.

At this point Student C stopped coming to class. When he reappeared after two weeks he came up to me waving his journal. "Look," he said, "I've got some more chapters. I wrote them while I was in the hospital." I looked, and indeed there they were—chapters with titles such as "The Friend," "The Street," "The Hustle"—conversation, description, event, all together in one enormous thirty-page unpunctuated paragraph.

About this time students in writing classes at Oakland High School were asked to submit statements describing their own writing processes for inclusion in a booklet to give to Alex Haley, who was coming to Oakland

as part of a Scholar in Residence program. I asked Student C if he could describe how he went about writing his book (I think I wondered whether he had really done it himself) and he said, sure, he could do that.

> "My name is.... and I am writing axbxx a book and its called 357 Magnums. I know that there are things that I can not do and then there are things I know for sure that I can do. Such as the book that I'm writing I had a lot of problem with the charters and the places that they are spose to be at such as a man in hollywood who is a young cop. Or a young boy from New York who's parents die in a auto crash. Sooner or later it comes to me I don't know how but it does.
>
> In my story I have two young men who are plice officers and they live in Los Angles. And I hardly know anything about L.A. but I Just kaxx love to use other lucocations no matter where it is. And I like to write exciting things so that they would seem real and not so fake. I sort of learned how to write my book by reading about a real life thing. And asking people who were there or do that certain thing or can.

In the course evaluation that students filled out at the end of the semester, Student C made the following assessments:

Evaluate your writing now as compared with the beginning of this class:			
	Less	Same	Better
Ability to organize ideas			✓
Ability to express feeling in writing			✓
Ability to get ideas for what you want to say		✓	
Your knowledge of vocabulary		✓	
Your knowledge of sentence structure			✓
Your knowledge of spelling			✓
Your over-all self-confidence about writing			✓ ✓ ✓

In the comment section he wrote: "I started a book in this class and I probly would have never done that at home or anywhere else. I like this class and I hope you keep it the same way always."

I would agree with Student C's self-assessment that his organization, spelling, and sentence structure improved somewhat, though in my judgment improvement was not great. The significant gain, however, is in his self-confidence, evidenced by his willingness to start a book and his manifest pride in the undertaking. Symptomatic of this change, perhaps,

was a concomitant improvement in his handwriting: his words became legible, the letters larger, more carefully formed, clearer—as if for the first time he wanted what he had written to be read.

IN RETROSPECT

Forty percent of those regularly attending the class (ten students) elected (from among eight to ten other possibilities) to take another writing course the next semester. Eight chose Intermediate Composition and two took Creative Writing, both college preparatory classes. This evidence of the students' continuing interest in writing and the following summary of their course evaluations indicate that the structure of the course (more specifically, of the last six weeks of the course) did indeed have a positive influence on the students' skills and attitudes.

QUESTIONNAIRE *Evaluate your writing now as compared with the beginning of this course:*	Less	Same	Better
Ability to organize ideas		7	17
Ability to express feelings in writing		6	16
Ability to get ideas for what you want to say		8	14
Your knowledge of vocabulary		12	9
Your knowledge of sentence structure		11	10
Your knowledge of spelling		10	11
Your overall self-confidence about writing	1	8	14
Evaluate this class	Not at all	Some-what	Very
Do you think making copies of students' writing is useful?	3	12	10
Do you think having students read aloud their writing is useful?	1	5	18
How much did you enjoy this class?	1	11	10
How useful do you consider this class?		5	15

The experiment allowed certain inductive discoveries to take place, some by the teacher, some by students, some jointly.

- Once again, I realized that student discovery of error is more effective than teacher correction because it leads to the habit of revision.
- The discovery of the considerable variety of writings to emerge from

a single class was a revelation to students; and who wrote what was sometimes also revealing: the quiet girl, who wrote funny stories; the kid who never said anything, who wrote long technical descriptions of what he needed to learn before he could become an astronaut; the girl dressed like a model, who wrote about childhood poverty.

- The students discovered (and I reaffirmed) the importance of questions in critiquing writing. Students soon develop the ability to ask, when confronted with a confusing piece of writing, appropriate questions, questions that will help the writer clarify what is not clear.
- The students recognized that writing itself is a process of discovery, that the writer often finds out what he thinks as he writes.

Most important of all, the class procedures allowed the students to experience, in a fairly realistic way, some of the important stages in the writing process and, moreover, allowed me to reinforce and validate those experiences, to connect them with the similar experiences of professional writers. Students struggled with "what to write," saw others writing and struggling, experienced the elation of finishing and the urgency of wanting someone else to read what they had written.

From a student journal (describing the process of trying to write a skit):

> That day in class we were trying to get our act together but we couldn't think of anything, so that night when I went home I went in my room and sat on the bed and thought to myself. I still couldn't come up with anything. So I got up the next morning at 4:00 and turned on the radio and I just started writing and I didn't want to stop. I was so proud of myself, even though I left out a few words."

From the same journal, a note to me:

> I would like for you to get me started on that what I wrote about combining music and writing together. I know I can do it but I need a start. Or if you know someone who can get me started. Look around there's a lot to write about if you're serious about writing.

I didn't tell the students they were excellent writers, nor did they necessarily come to think of themselves as excellent writers, but they did come to see writing as another possible pleasurable human activity that they not only might but could practice.

And finally, in retrospect, although I didn't notice it at the time, the class did become a community. "We're a family," I remember a student saying about the group at his table. The students, like members of a family, had their squabbles, their rivalries, but they did help each other; they cared what happened.

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Appendix:
WRITING WORKSHOP MATERIALS

1. Sample Weekly Assignment Sheet
2. Guidelines for Reading Aloud
3. Sample Feed-back Sheet
4. Additional Pre and Post Writing Samples
   A. Student D

      Pre: "Do You Believe in Long or Short Engagements"
      Post: "Who Done It:

   B. Student E

      Pre: "What I Would Like to Do in 10 Years"
      Post: "The Most Frightening Game"

   C. Student F

      Pre: "Sunday"
      Post: "Earl"

1. Sample Weekly Assignment Sheet

WRITING WORKSHOP

TOPICS FOR THIS WEEK

What did you do during the strike? How did you spend your time? Was it fun? Was it boring? Describe settings, conversations, and events.

Interview someone -- parent, student, teacher, administrator (not someone in this class) about the strike. Write out at least ten questions and show them to me ahead of time. Do the interview on tape and play it for the class; the interview must be at least five minutes long.

Teacher observation and note taking: choose one of your classes to record events. Write down what the teacher says, how he/she looks, any characteristic gestures or expressions, funny remarks, incidents in the class that day. Turn in your notes and see me for how to write them up.

Write a letter to a new sophomore coming the OHS. Tell them what this school is like; what is cool and what is not cool; what they need to know about classes, teachers, and grading; what activities are like; how to make friends and get along. In other words, give all kinds of helpful advice

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JOURNAL WRITING: THREE PAGES A WEEK

OTHER WRITING TOPICS: INVENT YOUR OWN OR USE THE CARDS IN THE BOX

YOU ARE AN EXPERT ON OHS. WRITE ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU KNOW. ALL GOOD WRITERS WRITE ABOUT WHAT THEY KNOW A LOT ABOUT.

2. Guidelines for Reading Aloud

GUIDELINES FOR ORAL READING OF STUDENT WRITING

1. Why are we reading our own writings aloud?

   Reading aloud helps the author hear what his writing sounds like and having other people hear it and comment may give him new ideas. Also, it is useful as well as interesting to see the large variety of writings in a single class.

2. Should the author say anything about what he has written?

   All that is necessary is to read your own paper aloud, but if you wish you may comment on how you got your idea, any changes you would make if you were rewriting, and answer any questions the class may have. Readers sometimes want to know whether an incident is real or imaginary; authors, of course, do not have to reveal this information unless they wish to.

3. What sorts of comments shall I make to help the other writers?

   Notice both what is good and what needs improving. For example, if the piece of writing is very short, what questions does it leave the reader wondering about? Write them down -- they may give the author an idea for whole new paragraphs or pages or chapters.

   Is the piece of writing confusing? If so, what are the details or facts that mix the reader up. Suggest to the writer what he might do to clarify the situation.

   Are there just too many grammar errors? (Notice how when someone reads aloud he/she almost automatically corrects out loud what is wrong on paper. This is why it is good to read your own writings aloud to yourself and notice if what you say aloud is the same as what you have written.) If there are a lot of errors drop a hint to the writer that they are making trouble for the reader. If you see something you are sure is a mistake you may mark and correct it.

   Note especially good features--a fine sentence, a piece of good description, vivid conversation. And go ahead and comment on the topic, incident, or ideas, particularly if you identify or agree with it.

   Be specific. Sign your name or initials to all comments.

3. Sample Feed-back Sheet

YOUR NAME _____

Author's name	What is the writing about?	Rank the paper: 1, 2, or 3	Describe one section you think is especially good.
G_____ W_____	A MAN WAS following GLORIA FROM THE BUS STOP SHE WARNED him SHE SAID I would CALL the police MAN.	(2)	When A couple CAME and took the bus with gloria so the MAN wouldn't follow her NO MORE.
B_____ H_____	Coming home from football practice and what you did waiting for the bus.	(2)	When the police ~~xxx~~ didn't take the boys down town to the police station.
A_____ M_____	About when ~~xxx~~ ~~xxx~~ he was playing a trick on this girl friend because she played a trick on him	(1)	When he kept calling her on the phone every 15 minutes on the same phone

4. Additional Pre and Post Writing Samples

Student D: Pre-Writing Sample

Do you believe in long or short engagements

I Believe in long engagement because when they start with long engagements they mostly likely stayed with each other. Short engagement is not worth it because you will work your time.

Short engagement will cause alot of problem, when when a girl body or a man body just for fun then breakup. love will begin to get fols, and rent some house and transportation, the parents will be arguing and yelling on the short engagement.

that why I believe in long engagement, even the brain up that will have alot of memory.

Student D: Post-Writing Sample

Who done it ?

There were two guest leaving shortly after eleven at the Cranleigh Court during the night.

Mercat Cross was a lovely buffet, and was serving sandwiches ~~and bar~~ to John's old friends.

John Carr is the one hundred thousandth customer Paul Noble has served as an art dealer and Joe Henderson is a salesman selling bread. He has very sparse hair with a very reddish beard and walks like a rabbit. Paul is one of the best art dealer in town, he gets people to buy paintings. His charm and his talkative mind encouraged people to buy the paintings.

Mrs John Carr just came back from a Ladies Clubs of America Ground her jewelry stolen. She came ten minute after 12:00 midnight. Everybody was thinking it must be a burglary. Mrs Carr was calling her security guard. When everybody was searching for him Paul found him in the wine cellar. He was state with the gun bitchin smoke. Mr. Carr new that no burgler could use a gun ~~because~~ electronic motion could sense it from outside the fences. Only inside they could have guns. Mrs. Carr also have electrical fences so he turn it on. He might thinks the burgler is still around.

Shortly after a doorbell rang. It was Sergeant Steve Hunt from the Criminal Investigation Department. He was asking the description of the burgler. He Butler answered, he had a black cloth mask on. The Sergeant said, when

did you last see him, Baltes answered, out in the yard about thirty five after you came. Mr. Carr. said, why I wasn't in bed at the. The Baltes said, I didn't want to alarm all of you, & be exercising I will have some chores to do. Mrs. Carr. said, go on right ahead,

Mr. Carr said, the electrical fence is on, Mr. Hunt was on the phone he found the burglar alarm, then a call from P.D. he said that the security guard was dead on arrival. Mrs. Carr. said the security guard was P.D. she said what is a P.D.? Mr. Hunt said, dead on arrival son.

This is need a little help in this case Mr. Hunt said, Chief bring one of your best men here at 2723 Cranleigh, Mr. Hunt suspect and suicide. Police man said, who did you suspect? Mr. Hunt said, the butler I was two o'clock ~~to the room~~ so could leave. Some people was sleeping

Mr. Hunt was on the front door. And the police man was on the back door. They couldn't escape because it was too far down. At 20 o'clock the ~~fire~~ was on. Everybody evacuated, Mr Hunt knew that the suspect would escape. He found his suspect on top of the fence caught with his pants, Police said its the butler. Mrs Carr said, & did he get on the fences, Mr. Carr said the electrical fences was off. Policeman said, & did you know that the butler did it. Mr Hunt said, he had all the evidence the butler broke and he was in and window and that the butler did.

Student E: Pre-Writing Sample

What I would like to do in 10 years.

For now I would like to become a soccer player. (professional that is) But if I don't make it, I'm studying right now on going to study to be a paramedic. What would be a good job, risky, but good. I would like to live not poor, and not rich, just normal, middle class life. I would be able to support my family by the same job I study for, paramedic. In order to get up there, I would have to study and finish the high school with good grades in order to be accepted for medical school. And if I succeed in that everything is going to be smooth.

Student E: Post-Writing Sample

THE MOST FRIGHTENING game

It was a cool Thursday afternoon, like 3:20. Us O.H.S. were hosting Fremont High for the O.A.L. soccer championship. We were rated fourth place this year, and fremont was rated first. We were going into this game with a 8-1-0 record, and Fremont had a 7-2-0 record. One game behind of becoming co-champions. But we didn't want to share the O.A.L. championship with nobody. The game started by the referee blowing the whistle. We were playing a pretting good first half, but not as good as Fremont was playing. They were out running us until we gave in a little, then Fremont scored by the mistake of the goalie. The ball was kicked from the corner, and it went in and out of the goalies hands, and landed in front of a Fremont forward. All he did was kick it in the goal with no sweat. The goalie never had a chance at the ball. They were leading in the game 1-0 with 20 minutes left in the first half. Soon the first half ended. Our coach was a little disappointed because we were not playing like a first place team. After the coach gave us a little pep talk we were fired up and ready. The second half had started and Fremont had been tougher then the first half. Fremont was shooting the ball toward the O.H.S. ~~built~~ goal as if they were free shoots. But even though the stakes were low the O.H.S. team didn't give up. especially the goalie. He was stopping shots left and right. There was a moment of silence on the O.H.S. side. There was only three minutes left in the game. A tie or a win would give the wildcats a first place position all alone. But all the cheering from the Fremont side, made the Fremont defense stronger and stronger. A pass was made from a fremont defener and was intercepted at mid field by a O.H.S. halfback and pass it to the forward who out run the Fremont defense and shot the ball into the goal for a O.H.S. score. The O.H.S. side went wild while the Fremont side came to silence. The game had ended in a 1-1 tie. The referee had ruled two two minute halfs A ten minute over time. In the first half it was all defense for both teams. It was the final seconds when the fremont halfback ~~passed~~ passed the ball to one of their forwards who headed the ball to the corner

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I got finish she want me to clean-up the front room. After that I took me a bath, and put on my tennis clothes. My hair didn't come out so good. Eddie, Donna, and me went a played tennis at Brookdale park on High street. We played in the hot sun all day. It was really to hot outside to ~~really~~ play tennis anyway, but we stilled played. When I got ~~got~~ back home it was about 7:30 p.m. I took another bath. There were lots of good T.V. pieces coming on I stayed home for the rest of the night looking at T.V.

Sunday morning came, it seem like it was much hotter then the day before. On Sundays I like ~~go to~~ bike ride. I rode around the lake with Donna Peggy, Belinda, and me. The lake was pack with people. People were playing volleyball, and football. ~~I took~~ We rode around the lake about two times. I went home and got my clothes ready for the next day at school

The End

Student F: Post-Writing Sample

One summer day their was a boy name Earl. He always got in trouble. Earl was the baby in his family.

One time Earl was outside and Emmaniel and me were outside while Dale was fixing Emmaniel car in the drive way. Emmaniel was setting in his car and I was setting in my brother's car. Emmaniel and me were talking. Earl came up to the car talking about Emmanuel and how he looked. Emmanid said," If you keep on talking about me I'm going to get me my little brother to beat you up."

Earl said," I'll kick your brother ass, punk, and your too

Emmaniel said" Boy you better shut-up.

Earl said," You make me shut-up punk." Earl kept

on talking more and more, Earl left about ten minutes later.

Emmanuel and me started back talking. Emmanuel said," I would chit him, but he's to little for me!" I said," Well Emmanuel what can you aspect if your mother and father don't believe what he does most of the time."

Earl played around lots of bad boys That came over from another neighborhood. Earl would started fires in empty lots with them. Earl was'il really bad deep down inside, but he had a heart of gold. The other boys were older and Earl tried to follow in their foot steps instead of his own because he didnt whave anybody to look up too or, nobody his age, and he did have anybody to talk too really.